What is claimed is:

1. A method of providing access to objects on a computer network, the method comprising the steps of:

a) maintaining on the computer network a plurality of first addresses;

b) recording on at least one physical icon a unique one of the first addresses;

c) reading a certain first address from a certain physical icon;

d) linking a destination address of an arbitrary-sized object with the certain first address; and

e) providing access to the arbitrary-sized object identified by the destination address.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein step e) comprises substeps:

e1) reading the certain first address from the certain physical icon;

e2) resolving the link identified by the certain first address to obtain the destination address; and

e3) providing access to the arbitrary-sized object identified by the destination address.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein a first address is a network URL.

4. The method according to claim 2, wherein a destination address is a network URL.

5. The method according to claim 1, wherein in step c) the reading from a physical icon is by one of OCR characters, MICR characters, bar code, magnetic stripe, RF patch antenna, printed circuit, short-range RF transmission, and infrared transmission.

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein step d) is contingent on a current user's having demonstrated a right to access the certain object.

7. The method according to claim 1, wherein step e) is contingent on a current user's having demonstrated a right to access the arbitrary-sized object.

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein:

steps b) and c) are performed in response to instruction by a first party;

possession of the certain physical icon is transferred to a second party; and

step e) is performed in response to instruction by the second party.

9. The method according to claim 8, wherein:

the certain physical icon is flat and flexible;

the arbitrary-sized object is associated with one of:

an issue of a printed publication;

demographic information related to distribution channels of copies of a printed publication; and

an intended recipient of a copy of a printed publication;

the second party is a recipient of a copy of the printed publication; and

possession of the certain physical icon is transferred to the second party by inserting the certain physical icon into the copy of the printed publication.

10. A system for providing access to objects on a computer network, comprising:

a plurality of physical icons, each bearing a unique machine-readable first address;

at least one network server for providing access to first addresses identified by the plurality of physical icons;

a first data appliance configured to read a first address from a certain physical icon, forward said first address to the network server, and forward to the network server a destination address of an arbitrary-sized object specified by a user of the first data appliance;

the at least one network server being configured to receive the destination address of the arbitrary-sized object, and to link the first address with the destination address of the arbitrary-sized object;

a second data appliance configured to read the first address from the certain physical icon, forward the first address to the at least one network server, and to receive the arbitrary-sized object obtained by resolving the link within the first address.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein the first data appliance and the second data appliance are the same physical data appliance.

12. The system of claim 10, wherein the first data appliance and the second data appliances are associated with different users.

13. The system of claim 12 wherein the first data appliance and the second data appliance are not collocated.

14. The system of claim 10 , wherein the physical icons are cards.

15. The system of claim 10, wherein the physical icons are cards substantially the size of credit cards.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein the physical icons are substantially made of plastic carrying a machine-readable medium.

17. The system of claim 14, wherein the medium of the machine-readable URLs is chosen from the group consisting of OCR characters, MICR characters, bar code, magnetic stripe, RF patch antenna, printed circuit, short-range RF transmission, and infrared transmission.

18. A method of providing access to objects on a computer network, comprising the steps of:

a) maintaining on the computer network a plurality of first addresses, each indicating a certain first object;

b) machine-reading a certain first address from a certain physical icon of a plurality of physical icons, each physical icon containing one of the first addresses;

c) accessing a certain first object identified by the certain first address and presenting on a user interface a representation of the certain first object;

d) storing in the first object a second address identifying an arbitrary-size object selected in response to manipulation on the user interface; and

e) subsequently accessing the arbitrary-sized object according to the second address.

19. The method according to claim 18, wherein step e) comprises substeps:

e1) machine-reading the first address from the certain physical icon;

e2) accessing the first object in response to the first address;

e3) resolving the link pointing to a destination address of an arbitrary-sized second object, said destination address being contained in the first object; and

e4) providing access to the arbitrary-sized second object in response to the destination address.

20. The method according to claim 18, wherein in step c) the reading from a physical icon is by one of OCR characters, MICR characters, bar code, magnetic stripe, RF patch antenna, printed circuit, short-range RF transmission, and infrared transmission.

21. The method according to claim 18, wherein step d) is contingent on a current user's having demonstrated a right to access the certain object.

22. The method according to claim 18, wherein step e) is contingent on a current user's having demonstrated a right to access the arbitrary-sized object.

23. The method according to claim 18, wherein:

steps b), c), and d) are performed in response to instruction by a first party;

possession of the certain physical icon is transferred to a second party; and

step e) is performed in response to instruction by the second party.

24. The method according to claim 23, wherein:

the certain physical icon is flat and flexible;

the arbitrary-sized object is associated with one of:

an issue of a printed publication;

demographic information related to distribution channels of copies of a printed publication; and

an intended recipient of a copy of a printed publication;

the second party is a recipient of a copy of the printed publication; and

possession of the certain physical icon is transferred to the second party by inserting the certain physical icon into the copy of the printed publication.